1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

137 occurs at the higher elevations. Along the rivers and creeks, as well as in the forest, there is a profusion of red willow. Also interspersed in the forest are patches of quaking aspen (locally called poplar), birch, and cottonwood. The area contains many edible berries, including the strawberry, soapberry, low and high bush cranberry, raspberry, and blueberry. Along dry sloughs there is often a profusion of coarse grass, while niggerheads are found in an occasional swamp.

136 Animal life is quite abundant. Represented are large game animals such as the moose, woodland caribou, sheep, and goat and fur-bearing mammals like the lynx, mink, wolverine, otter, fox, coyote, wolf, beaver, and marten. Deer are rare. In the high mountains gopher and groundhog are numerous. The ubiquitous red squirrel is heard chattering everywhere and the spruce forests are overrun with the small trails worn by the feet of the Arctic hare (locally called rabbit). Fish are generally abundant in the lakes, mainly lake trout, whitefish, and jackfish (or pike). In the rivers the principal species are trout, grayling (sometimes called bluefish), and sucker.

The mosquito is a plague until the middle of August; the small "no-see-um" becomes a nuisance at about the time when the mosquito disappears and remains until late October. The gray mouse is a household pest whose numbers foil any attempt at eradication. Birds include the robin, crow, hoot owl, whiskey jack (or Canada jay), and various winter species like the grosbeak. There are also such fowl as the duck, goose, ptarmigan, willow grouse, and spruce hen. The two latter species are sometimes collectively referred to by the Indians as "chicken," although a distinction is recognized between them.

[825]

●101 131 619 The name "Kaska" is the conventional term adopted by anthropologists to designate a number of linguistically and culturally related Athapaskan Indian bands or tribes living in the area of northern British Columbia, southern Yukon Territory, and Northwest Territories in Canada.[1] The present monograph is the result of work done with four of these tribes, but does not include the Espato'tena, who dwell in the Northwest Territories, east of the Rocky Mountains and are ethnographically unknown. The term Kaska is largely synonymous with the less satisfactory designation, Nahani, which, although formerly used by the Kaska to refer to neighboring Indian groups, is not employed as a term of reference within the society.

The four tribes under discussion are locally identified with particular geographical regions, which are in turn definable by the rivers and lakes constituting their main drainage channels. Except possibly in British Columbia, where trap lines are now formally registered, the boundaries between tribal units are not precisely recognized by the members of any tribe. Figure 2 shows the locations of the four Kaska tribes and their hunting and trapping districts, although only the second two listed below call themselves Kaska.

1. The Frances Lake Indians, the most northern tribe, live around Frances Lake, Simpson Lake, and the upper Frances River.[2] Their country extends from the Pelly River watershed on the northwest to the Mackenzie Mountains in the east.

[1] Osgood, *The Distribution of the Northern Athapaskan Indians* (1936), 13.

[2] The Albers on their walk up the Frances River in 1942 found the first signs of Frances Lake Indian camping grounds above the middle canyon of that stream. Albers and Albers, *Family Afoot in the Yukon Wilds* (1942) 614.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

101
131
619

Fig. 2. Map of Kaska and Adjacent Indian Groups.

[p. 34]

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

2. The Upper Liard Indians. This tribe consists of six families living along the Liard River from about eighteen miles north of the Alaska Highway crossing above Lower Post to within a hundred miles of that river's source. Their trapping ranges from the Cassiar Mountains on the west to the Simpson Mountains in the east, where they frequently encounter members of the Frances Lake Tribe.

3. The Dease River Indians are designated in the Indian Affairs Branch census as the Casca Band. They occupy the basin of Dease Lake and Dease River north to Lower Post and also range west along Blue River and McDame Creek to the Height of Land.

4. The Nelson Indians are the most easterly of these four tribes.[1] They live east of Lower Post on both the north and south banks of the Liard River and range up the Hyland, Smith and, for a short distance at least, Muddy (or Kechika) Rivers. Families trapping south along the Muddy River meet the Tsetsa'na and Bear Lake Indians (both Sekani groups). A number of Nelson Indians trapping south of the Liard and up the Muddy River appear to have identified themselves with the Tsetsa'na through intermarriage. Eastward, the Nelson people hunt to the Rocky Mountains and in the past crossed these ranges to trade at Fort Nelson, from whence they derive their name.

In 1944-45, Lower Post, located at Milepost 620 on the Alaska Highway (Pl. 1), was the main trading post serving all of these tribes. A smaller outpost, supplied by air freight, served a portion of the Frances Lake Indians. Less than five years before, however, trading posts were in operation at McDame Creek, eighty miles up Dease River from Lower Post, and at the head of Dease Lake.

To the south and southwest the Kaska are adjoined by the Tahltan Indians, trading at Telegraph Creek on the Stikine River. To the west, across the barrier of the Cassiar Mountains, the Dease River and Upper Liard Indians occasionally meet the Taku Indians trading at Teslin Lake Post. Beyond the Taku are the Tlingit Indians, occupying the Alaska panhandle. On the north the Kaska are bounded by the Pelly River Indians (Tutchone nation). To the northeast are the Mackenzie (Mountain) Indians and, east, the Espato'tena and Slave Indians of Fort Nelson, Nelson Forks, and Fort Liard. The Slave refer to the Kaska as "Grand Lakers," which is apparently a translation of tutlo'tena, the present day Kaska term of reference for the Frances Lake people. Occupying the middle and upper Muddy River are the Sekani bands already referred to, who divide their trade between Lower Post and Whitewater (Fort Ware), on the Finlay River.

[1] This statement would not hold if the present monograph included the Goat Indians, or Espato'tena, who trade into Forts Liard and Simpson. In the system of classification adopted for the Northern Athapaskans, these people have commonly been grouped as Kaska (see Osgood, *The Distribution of the Northern Athapaskan Indians* [1932], 396). Since such classification is primarily on a linguistic basis and because no study of the Espato'tena has yet been reported, the validity of their classification with the Kaska may legitimately be questioned, especially if reason for doubt can be advanced. Contrary evidence comes from Old Man stating, on the basis of brief acquaintance with this tribe, that he could not too well understand their dialect. This suggests that the provisional grouping of the Espato'tena with other Kaska tribes may be incorrect.

A somewhat cursory examination of the dialect of the Tsetsa'na people tends to warrant their exclusion from the Kaska nation, despite their proximity to the latter. See Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia* (1937), 2, 20; Osgood, *The Distribution of the Northern Athapaskan Indians* (1932), 17.

2: Teit E-5 (1912-1915) 1917
ND12 Nahane ND12

KASKA TALES.[1]

BY JAMES A. TEIT.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Preface	427
1. Story of Beaver	429
2. Origin of the Earth	441
3. The Great Flood	442
4. Origin of Fire, and Origin of Death	443
5. Raven, or Big-Crow	444
6. Big-Man (Déne Tco')	444
7. The Brothers, Big-Man, and the Giants	445
8. The Giants and the Boys	448
9. Bladder-Head Boy; or, The Monster that ate People	450
10. The Kaska Man who made Whales	451
11. War with the Swan People	453
12. The Deserted Woman	455
13. The Sisters who married Stars	457
14. The Man who cohabited with his Sister	459
15. Story of the Water-Man	460
16. The Deceitful Wife	461
17. The Owl-Woman	462
18. The Dog-Man and Dog-Children	463
19. Story of Lynx-Man	464
20. The Fog-Man	465
21. Rabbit-Man (Ga.'tcoeze')	467
22. Wolverene	469
23. Wolverene and his Wives	470
24. Wolverene and Wolf	471
25. Story of the Baby stolen by Wolverene	471

PREFACE.

THE following collection of tales or traditions is from the Kaska of the northern interior of British Columbia. The Kaska and Tahltan are closely related tribes of the Nahani division of the Athapascan stock, and occupy territories adjacent to each other. The Tahltan inhabit the whole region of the upper Stikine River, and extend easterly to Dease Lake and River, where they meet the Kaska, who claim the country from there down to the Liard. The Tahltan are thus chiefly on the Pacific drainage slope, and the Kaska altogether on the Arctic slope. Owing to their location, the Tahltan have an abundance of salmon in their country, while the Kaska have none. Both tribes live

[1] The present collection of Kaska tales, together with another one of Tahltan tales, was collected by Mr. J. A. Teit in the seasons of 1912 and 1915 in the region of Stikine River, British Columbia. These two seasons of field-work were devoted to a general ethnological investigation of the Tahltan and Kaska Indians, under the auspices of the Geological Survey of Canada. The present publication embraces the mythological results of the trips. Other aspects of the ethnology collected by Mr. Teit will be published by the Geological Survey from time to time in the form of special monographs. To facilitate the appearance of Mr. Teit's Tahltan and Kaska tales, the Geological Survey of Canada has authorised its Division of Anthropology to intrust their publication to the American Folk-Lore Society. — E. SAPIR, Head of Division of Anthropology, Geological Survey of Canada.

2: Teit E-5 (1912-1915) 1917
ND12 Nahane ND12

101 Both tribes live
[224] chiefly by hunting and trapping, but the Kaska depend more on the
136 chase than do the Tahltan. Large game-animals are abundant, consisting of moose, caribou, sheep, goat, and bear. Marmots are plentiful in certain parts, and buffalo are said to have been fairly numerous at one time in the more eastern sections of the country.

101 The Kaska are entirely surrounded by Athapascan tribes, while the Tahltan are neighbors of tribes of two other stocks; viz., the Tlingit to the northwest and west, and the Niska and Kitksan tribes of the Tsimshian stock to the southwest. To the south the Sikani, Carrier, and Chilcotin tribes of the Athapascan stock separate the Tahltan and Kaska from the Shuswap and Lillooet, the nearest tribes of the
439 interior Salish. Owing largely to their position, the Tahltan had a
487 great deal of intercourse with the Tlingit, much more than with any other people. Intercourse and trading were chiefly by way of Stikine River. Trade was in the hands of the Tlingit of Wrangell and vicinity, who annually transported goods by canoe up the river to the head of canoe navigation, a little above Telegraph Creek and close to the headquarters of the Tahltan. The people of the latter tribe acted as middlemen in passing coast products inland, and inland products coastward. The main trade-route between the far east (the Mackenzie valley and the plains) and the Pacific coast in this part of British Columbia lay through the Tahltan and Kaska territory, and there is evidence of a number of cultural features having penetrated a long distance in both directions along that route. Here, as in other parts of the west, the main trade-routes lay as nearly east and west as the physical features of the country allowed; while other routes running north and south within the interior were unimportant, notwithstanding the fact that the nature of the country generally was favorable for travel and intercourse.

487 It may be expected that dissemination of tales has occurred chiefly
177 along the main trade-routes, where intercourse between the tribes was most frequent and closest. Hence throughout the interior, dissemina-
X 171 tion of tales has followed east and west lines rather than north and
773 south. As the same conditions as to routes prevailed in the southern interior as in the northern, it seems probable that a number of the incidents in tales of the Tahltan and Kaska which correspond with those in tales of the interior Salish have not passed directly from Athapascan to Salish tribes, or *vice versâ*, but have reached both from the same eastern and western sources,—chiefly, it seems, the latter.
177 The Tahltan assert that in the old trading-rendezvous on the upper
X 171 Stikine, members of the two tribes associated there for weeks together,
773 and that one of the features of meeting was story-telling. Tahltan *raconteurs* told their stories one day, and Tlingit told theirs the following day. Sometimes they thus told stories turn about for

4: HonigmannE-5 (1943-1945)1956 ND12 Nahane ND12

ARE THERE NAHANI INDIANS?

by

John J. Honigmann

101 According to the map-makers two "Nahanni" Rivers flow into the Mackenzie and Liard rivers. But is there a tribe of Nahani Indians? Has anyone ever heard an Athapaskan Indian seriously designate himself as "Nahani"? There is, as will be seen, good reason why such a term would not likely be employed to refer to one's own group.

131 The logical place to look for Nahani people would be in the northern drainage slope of the Liard River or northwest of the confluence of the Liard and Mackenzie Rivers. It is here that the rivers bearing that name originate. This has long been rather sensationally described as a region of mystery, one including hidden valleys, cannibal Indians, and real enough hot springs. In 1890 Keith in his Letters to Mr. Roderic Mackenzie indeed wrote of the Fort Liard area as having been abandoned by the "Na ha ne tribe" under pressure from a new population (5, p. 11). However, this is not the only region where the elusive Nahani have been said to dwell.

From the upper Liard (Kaska) Indians, whose country borders that river from about Lower Post, B.C., to within some hundred miles of its source in the Yukon, the writer in 1944 heard that long ago Nahani hunted in the region between McDame Creek Post on Dease River eastward to Kechika River. These people are also said to have been a tribe of giants which died out because of addiction to certain evil practices (4, p.21). Dease River was at one time actually also called "Nahany" River. Another Kaska informant labelled the Pelly River people in southern Yukon Territory as Nahani. It is doubtful that they would acknowledge the designation.

101 While at Fort Nelson, B.C., in 1943, the writer was assured that Nahani merely constituted another name for the Kaska Indians (there called Grand Lakers) who were said to live west of Nelson Forks and northwest of Fort Nelson (3, p. 24). When

●101 contacted the next year, the Kaska did not agree but, as already indicated, were ready with another application of the word (4, p. 21). The Handbook of American Indians, published by the Bureau of American Ethnology in 1912, also locates Indians called "Nahane" in the region west of the Rockies, i.e., the territory of the Kaska (1, p. 10). The Bureau's more recent Indian Tribes of North America (1952) gives "Nahane" as signifying "people of the west" and identifies them as a major division of the Athapaskan linguistic stock including the several bands called Kaska as well as certain Tahltan Indians (6, p. 583).

Among possible conclusions, one is that the Nahani are a most nomadic tribe, shifting their location frequently and traveling long distances. Another is that the designation, Nahani, has at various times been applied to quiet distinct groups of people. The latter conclusion is distinctly more plausible. A hypothesis to explain this multiple usage of the word is not difficult.

Quite clearly "Nahani" is not of Indo-European origin. It is reasonable to assume that the word diffused to Europeans from Athapaskan speakers. But to whom did those speakers themselves apply the term? The situations in which the designation would likely be used became clear when the meaning of the word is explicated. The key to this lies in the bound morpheme na-, which signifies "enemy" or "hostile" (2, p. 225). The remaining morphology must be left to a better qualified Athapaskanist than this writer. It would seem that various Athapaskan people at different times designated relatively remote or distrusted Indian groups as evil, untrustworthy, or hostile. The literature contains numerous references to "Bad people." European visitors borrowed the appellation without fully understanding the context of use. By applying it to specific groups of Indians they have complicated the tribal distribution pattern.

Athapaskan Indians may still today use the word in this sense for people of whom they possess little knowledge, although tribal isolation is largely a thing of the past. But the word has also been reinterpreted within Athapaskan culture. The redefinition makes the meaning compatible with the altered situation. Nahani are now said to have lived in the past and to have disappeared. Thus, the current dwellers of the Kechika valley are no longer Nahani to the upper Liard River Kaska. Formerly, however, a

4: HonigmannE-5 (1943-1945)1956 ND12 Nahane ND12

quite distinct and evil population dwelt there.

"Nahani" would probably not so readily have come to serve as a tribal designation in English if the northern Athapaskans more frequently applied names to themselves. This, however, appears to have been most uncommon. Bands were content to refer to themselves as dene, "human beings," and labels like "Slave," "Kaska," "Goat Indians," "Brush Dwellers," "Sekani," and others are appellations originally applied by neighboring groups or invading foreigners. For example, the Cree appear to have bestowed the name "Slave" on certain Mackenzie River people. The term Etchaottine, "dwellers in a brushy place" or "Brush People" for the people along Fort Nelson River and Bistcho Lake probably originated with neighbors. When neighbors feared or mistrusted the people they were talking about, the term "Nahani" was applied rather than a less forceful, purely descriptive name.

Are there Nahani Indians? Taking the position of some small, fearful Indian band which felt its safety menaced by mysterious neighbors who dwelt across the divide, yes, there were Bad People. But what group would normally acknowledge that they truly represented Nahani? Ethnographically the label has little value and should be left solely as a geographical place-name.

University of North Carolina,
Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Albert Dease is a pure Kaska and probably the most prominent member of these people living in the Dease region, being looked upon as Chief. 115

Dandy Jim is a well known Tahltan noted for his affability and intelligence. He speaks the best English of any of the older Tahltan and also speaks Tlingit fluently. He is a member of the Nalakoten or Nahlin clan of the Raven Phratry.

INTRODUCTION - Nahani Tribal Divisions

The Tahltan and Kaska belong to the Déné or Northern group of the great Athapaskan family and linguistically are part of the division of this stock known as the Nahani. The two tribes speak closely related dialects and are neighbors. Their territories lie in the north-western interior of British Columbia generally speaking between the Cascade or Coast range of mountains in the West and the main Liard River to the East, and between latitudes 56° and 60° north. They form an extension of the Nahani to the south west, appearing as a point or wedge between the Tlingit to the west and northwest and the Nishga /Niska/ and Retikshen to the south (See map*). To the north is the main body of the Nahani, and to the east and southeast /are/ tribes of other divisions of the Déné. As the Tahltan and Kaska are the only occupants of Nahani south of latitude 60°, or at least the only Nahani tribes with headquarters south of 60° in British Columbia they may be named for convenience the Southern Nahani. The rest of the Nahani occupy a wide stretch of country extending north to at least between latitudes 64° - 65° north and, according to my present information, consist of some six recognized tribes or rather divisions speaking slightly divergent dialects. I have not as yet been able to determine the degree of divergence in the various dialects but if what information I have can be depended on in many cases the differences of dialect are slight, or less than between the Tahltan and Kaska. 101 131 197 131 197

The exact number and names of the Nahani divisions, it seems, can never be known exactly or definitely until most of the country occupied by them has been visited and the northern bands interviewed. So far I have been among the southern bands only. Other things which render the subject difficult and 101

* Map to appear in one of the forthcoming issues.

101 add to confusion are:

1) Two or more names are sometimes applied by different peoples (and even the same people) to one and the same band or division, and, again, two seemingly distinct divisions are sometimes called by the same name.

101 131 2) The nomadic nature of some of the bands, their wide range of wanderings; and the absence of well-defined boundaries of tribes and bands, etc.

3) The overlapping of territories in some places for periods of years and even occasional overlapping of headquarters of bands, or migration of families and bands (sometimes temporarily) into old territories of other bands seeking better facilities for trading or hunting. It seems that some of these people then lose their old names and are called by new names or sometimes by the name of the people in whose country they settle.

101 4) Lack of the tribal sides /sic/ or of tribal differentiation among some of the Indians themselves - several of whom may call themselves by one name at one time and another name at another, because they may have lived or made their headquarters for a number of years at each of two or three localities, thus seemingly looking upon themselves as being entitled to one name as much as another. This is made all the easier because nearly all the designations of groups of people among the Athabaskans are really not designations of peoples as such, or tribes, or nations, but have reference only to locality or environment, which, if changed by the people, the term by which they are known soon becomes inapplicable. Besides this, some of the designations for groups of people are very general terms not derived from specific place-names, such as 'mountain or high ground people,' 'by /the/ lake people,' etc., terms which may be easily used for widely different peoples. However, although peoples are thus loosely designated by names of their general headquarters still there is evidence that a number of the names of divisions and tribes are quite old; the people carrying the names have made their headquarters in the same general locality for a long time back.

101 197 619 One other thing which may be mentioned here is that although tribes of other linguistic stocks are

generally well differentiated in the minds of the Indians, - excepting perhaps in a few places where there has been much intermixture or intermarriage, - tribes of Athabaskan lineage are not differentiated in the same way. The Indians seem to consider all within their ken as bands or scattered groups of the one family speaking the same kind of language differing only in slight degree in certain localities. They seem to take no cognizance, for instance, of the linguistic groups of Nahani, Sekani and Slave. With them, on the whole, the closer the dialect or the linguistic relationship seems to them the closer the blood relationship is thought to be. However, if a dialect /of, for instance,/ Nahani, seems to differ more or be less understandable to them than a dialect of Sekani, they will consider the latter the closer related, although the former is the closer of the two in-reality or according to the White man's point of view. It seems the languages of the Nahani group and the Sekani and Slave groups are on the whole rather closely related, although sufficiently distinct for separate grouping. Perhaps partly owing to this reason, the Indians have hardly any sense of the groupings.

101 ●
197
619

In the Handbook of American Indians the following are given as the divisions of the Nahani group.

101
131

1. Tahltan) Tahltan Division — Drainage basin of Stikine River and its tributaries as far as the mouth of Iskut River, Dease Lake, and the river halfway to McDames Creek the northern sources of the Nass and some of the southern branches of the Taku in Alaska and British Columbia.
2. Takutine) — Teslin River and Lake and upper Taku River, the basin of the Big Salmon River extending north to the Pelly River and east to the Upper Liard River.

3. Titshotina) Kaska Division — Between the Cassiar Mountains and the Liard and Dease Rivers.
4. Etagottine)

5. Esbataottine (Bighorn people?) Mountains between the Liard River and the Peace River, British Columbia.

6.	Abbatotine 'Bighorn people'	Up the Pelly, MacMillan and Stewart River valleys, Yukon Territory.
7.	Sazentina	Region between Dease and Black Rivers, British Columbia.
8.	Ettchaottine 'People who act contrarily'	One division /around/ Francis Lake, B.C., and another in neighborhood of old Fort Halkitō.
9.	Etagottine (See No. 4) 'People in the air'	In valleys of Rocky Mountains between the Esbataottine and the Tukkutk kutchin latitude 66 north.
10.	Kraylongottine 'People at the end of the willows'	Between the Mackenzie River and Willow Lake, Mackenzie Territory.
11.	Klokegottine 'Prairie people'	Between Mackenzie River and Lakes Martre, Grandin and Taché, Mackenzie Territory.

and perhaps Lakuyip and Tsetsaut.

The list of Nahani tribes collected by me from Tahltan and Kaska differs considerably from the list as given in the Handbook. I did not get the names of Nos. 4, 6, 9, 10 and 11 at all. No. 6 may be the same term as No. 5, and Nos. 4 and 9 are probably the same. Only No. 1 corresponds with my list exactly. The Tahltan and Kaska class No. 2 as Tlingit. No. 3 is their name for the Upper Liard or Francis Lake Indians and No. 5 their name for the Beaver River Indians (the Beaver River that joins the Liard about longitude 125°, flowing from the north). They give a different name for Division No. 6. No. 7 is their name for the Kaska of McDames Creek. No. 8 seems to be the same name as applied by them to the Fort Liard Indians. I get no name of people in the exact habitats of 9, 10 and 11. I heard of no Nahani in the habitat given for No. 5. This region is occupied by Sekani and Slave. Of the two tribes mentioned as possibly Nahani, the Tsetsaut are considered different or more closely related to the Sekani, whilst the Lakuyip may be a division of the Tahltan formerly located on the upper branches of the Nass River.

Of the list of tribes obtained from the Tahltan and Kaska the following appear to be Nahani. 101 131 197

1.	Tahltan	They speak one dialect of the Nahani which may be called Tahltan.
2.	Sêsotêna	McDames Creek, Dease River, Muddy River and generally between Cassiar Mountains and the Liard.
3.	Titcotêna	Upper Liard River and Hyland River. They adjoin No. 2 in the north.
4.	Nā.ânî	Pelly River Indians. All the upper Pelly River. These people adjoin No. 3 in the north. According to the Kaska, Nos. 2 and 3 talk exactly the same dialect and No. 4 differs only in the slightest degree. These divisions speak a second dialect of the Nahani which may be called Kaska.
5.	eiyô.na	Adjoining the Pelly River Indians on the north, most of them on a large river which joins the Pelly, probably the Macmillan. They probably extend beyond to the head of the Stewart also. These people speak a slightly different dialect from the Kaska, my informants saying /that/ a good many words were more or less different. They will thus form a third division of the Nahani dialectically.
6.	Little Salmon River Indians (my informants had forgotten their Indian name)	On the Little Salmon River bordering, it is said, on 4 and 5. It is not clear whether their dialect is the same as /that/ spoken by No.5. It is said to differ rather

101
131
197

considerably from Kaska. One informant said 'these Indians speak quite a little different from Kaska.' They speak nearer to the dialect of No. 5 but he thought not the same. Possibly these people form a fourth dialectic division or they may fall in the same group with No. 5. The Tahltans claim they have very hard work to understand them.

7. Espātoten or histoten — The Goat tribe or Mountain Indians adjoining No. 3 on the east. On the upper Beaver River and in the mountains across the North and South Nahani Rivers between the Liard and Mackenzie Rivers. Speak a slightly different dialect from Kaska. Some informants said they talk very fast and some of their words are different from Kaska. When they speak slowly the Kaska can understand them fairly well. The speech of these people may form a third dialect of the Nahani.

8. tsetsexotēna — The habitat and affiliations of this tribe are uncertain, but it seems they probably belong to the Nahani group and inhabit the mountains north of No. 7. The Kaska were not clear as to the relationship of their speech and their exact habitat.

101
131 These divisions appear to comprise all the Nahani people known to the Tahltan and Kaska. There may however be other Nahani divisions unknown to them further to the north. As will be seen from the map, these peoples occupy territories contiguous to each other in a wide strip running north from about latitude 56 to latitude 64 north. I did not hear of any Nahani bands east of

the Mackenzie nor south of the Liard to the east of the Kaska. According to the Kaska the country east of the Mackenzie and around the lower Liard is held by the Dogrib and other tribes they think closely related to them. The ātcotēne of Fort Liard and the Black River, etc., appear to belong to this group viz., the Slave. In the Handbook Ettchaottine is given as a division of the Nahani, and again Etchaotine as the Slave proper, a division of the Etchareottine living between Liard River and the divide along Black, Beaver and Willow Rivers. This answers fairly well to the habitat of the ātcotēne as given by the Kaska. The three terms seem to be the same, or possibly Ettchaottine may be intended for Titcotēna, viz., the Frances Lake Indians. South of the Liard along the Nelson River, etc., Sekani separate the Nahani from the Slave. To the south, Nahani border on Sekani and Tsimshian tribes and to the west on Tlingit tribes as far north as latitude 62. In the extreme north, /there is/ little doubt, they border on the Kutchin. 101 131

Names for the Tribe

In a tribal or collective sense the Tahltan call themselves titcaxhanotēn 'people of titcaxhan.' They claim titcax.han is the name of an ancient seat or headquarters of the tribe close to the mouth of Tahltan River, viz., the little flat where the present salmon houses are on the East side of the government bridge crossing the Tahltan River. The meaning of the name is said to be 'salmon ascending the creek,' or to be connected with the ascent of salmon up the Tahltan River at this place, which was formerly a great salmon fishing place of the tribe and a central rendezvous and trading place. According to several informants this place was at one time the chief headquarters of the tribe and the original tribal seat. 101

The name Tahltan by which the tribe is now (altogether) known to the Whites is claimed to be of Tlingit origin. Taltankwan was formerly a common general term used by the Taku and Wrangel Tlingit for the tribe. It is really the Tlingit name for the low flat on the West side of the mouth of Tahltan River just opposite titcaxhan. Dandy Jim, who speaks Tlingit fluently, derives the term from Tlingit tał 'pan,' 'bowl' or something pan-shaped, and tan having the sense of permanency 'remain,' 'be,' 'is,' etc., the place being so named by the Tlingit because of the

●|01 deep basin-shaped hollow here. This flat was a great camping ground formerly in the fishing and trading seasons and the furthest east or most interior point /to which/ the Tlingit of Wrangel came to trade (with canoes.) The Tahltan River also gets its name from this flat. The Tahltan name of the River is tū.tzEdłe meaning 'small creek' or 'small water.' One informant gave taā.tzEdłe. Other explanations of the meaning of the word Tahltan are given by Morice and Emmons (see Emmons pp. 12 and 13,) but none of my informants agreed with their derivations.

The most common Tlingit name for the Tahltan is Konē.na 'strangers' or 'different country people' (according to some the Kaska and other interior tribes are not included in this designation.) TlinkEt ano kwan was given me as a Tlingit designation for any Interior Indians. The Kaska call the Tahltan na.ani (other pronunciations of the name are naha.ne, nēhrane, nExa.ne and nexōni, a name also given by them to the Pelly River Indians.) I got the following or many derivations of the name: 'people of that place' or 'people over there' (referring here to the West, see also Morice,) from or related to dēne.han 'people of that place' (han with reference to a headquarters or place where the people of a country or district put up their food.) The Tahltan recognize themselves as Nahani because /they are/ so called by Indians living east of them. It seems this term was adopted by the fur traders, and as a designation for the tribe /the use of this term by/ the Whites precedes the term Tahltan. As the fur traders first entered the Tahltan country from the east they naturally adopted the designation used for the Tahltan by their eastern neighbors. Later, when gold was discovered, followed by an influx of Whites from the West up Stikine River through Tlingit territory, the name Tahltan seems to have come more into vogue and in time became practically the only designation for the tribe used by the Whites.

The Northern tribes of the Interior Salish call the Tahltan by the name of Stikine, but this is a modern designation learned since 1874 from White packers and gold miners, some of whom called the tribe by this name only with reference to their habitat on the upper Stikine River and tributaries. The Tahltan were quite unknown to the Interior Salish even in name previous to the advent of the Whites. The Nass and Tsimshian name for the Tahltan is said to be estike.n or estikhe.n from stikhen, 'big river,' the Tlingit name for Stikine River.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

101
131

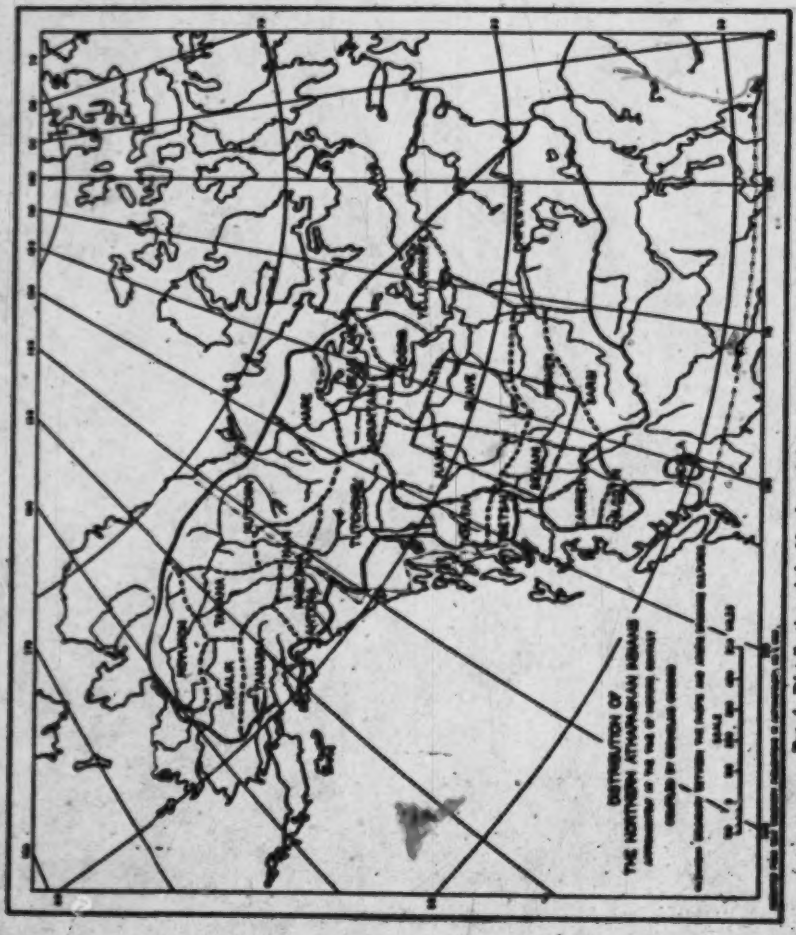

FIG. 1. Distribution of the Northern Athapaskan Indians (after Osgood).

[p. 10]

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

INTRODUCTION

THE present monograph is intended primarily to describe the aboriginal and time-of-contact lifeways of the Kaska Indians of northern British Columbia and southern Yukon Territory, Canada (Fig. 1). The writer's principal object has been to add to present knowledge concerning the Northern Athapaskan Indians. As far as the organization of the material is concerned, the cultural data follow this introduction, which includes, in addition to these preliminary remarks, a description of the environment (based mainly on contemporary observation), tribal distribution and nomenclature, population data, a sketch of psychological types, and an index of principal informants.[1] The description of aboriginal Kaska culture is divided into five main sections covering, respectively, data pertaining to the food quest, camp life and some associated activities, social organization, ideological system, and the life cycle. These main divisions are in turn further broken down. For many of the dress patterns, implements, and behaviors, alternatives are indicated. It must be kept in mind that evidence does not warrant the assumption that all such alternatives existed simultaneously.

Information has been obtained primarily from the Upper Liard and Dease River Kaska (Fig. 2). When available, data from other Kaska groups follow these two in the following order: Tselona, Espatotena, and Frances Lake Kaska. References to adjacent tribes, like the Tahltan, Pelly River people, Bear Lake Sekani, and Tlingit will be found in footnotes.

ENVIRONMENT

To the person who has not been raised to love the prairie the Cassiar, as the northwestern area of British Columbia and southern Yukon Territory is often called,[2] must appeal as a colorful and exciting region. Lying between the Rocky Mountains on the east and the Coast Range to the west the country is bounded north and south by water sheds of considerable height. Geologically the Cassiar may be considered as a portion of the Yukon Plateau.[3] Between the eastern and western ranges the land is rolling and crossed from northwest to southeast by the Cassiar Mountains, which extend from Tuslin Lake to the headwaters of the Finlay River (Fig. 2). Below McDame Creek, 80 miles south of Lower Post, the Dease River cuts a gorge through the Cassiar Mountains

[1] The history of the Cassiar and its people will not be presented in this monograph, since it has already been written in some detail. See Honigmann, *Culture and Ethos of Kaska Society* (1949), 38–50; Robinson, *Stikine River in 1898* (1899).

[2] For an impressionistic picture of the area see Turton, *Cassiar* (1934). The term Yukon is apparently derived from the Athapaskan word for Northern Lights, yukaqn. (Cf. Osgood, *Ingalik Material Culture* [1940], 439.) Le Jeune, however, derives the territory's name from a supposed "Yuki" (Wicked Ones) Indian tribe. Le Jeune, *Dictionnaire Général du Canada* (1931), II, 936.

[3] Lees, *Geology of Tuslin-Quiet Lake Area, Yukon* (1936), 5. See also Hanson and McNaughton, *Eagle-McDame Area, Cassiar District, British Columbia* (1936), 3–3; Kerr, *Dease Lake Area, Cassiar District, B. C.* (1936). For maps the reader is referred to Honigmann, *Culture and Ethos of Kaska Society* (1949), 32, 34.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

101
131
133

FIG. 2. Map of the Cassiar and Its People.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

172 of the people called Kaska must have crossed Bering Strait enroute from Asia. Leechman, who assumes migration movements toward the headwaters of the Yukon and thence along the Pelly, Liard, and Frances rivers, discovered along the Whitehorse and Snag sections of the Alaska Highway "chipped points, scrapers, large blades, a few other implements and large numbers of chips and flakes. The material employed was for the most part a fine-grained grey chert with a fairly well-marked conchoidal fracture; a certain amount of jasper and obsidian was also used."[17] Such may perhaps have been the primary tools of the early intermontane people, Whitehorse being only 300 miles northwest of Lower Post. Further south along the Highway Frederick Johnson discovered other cultural remains whose age he estimates to be about 7,000–9,000 years.[18] At least it is certain that the remote ancestors of the Kaska lived by food gathering and possessed the general pattern of social organization associated with such a technological base.

Between the time of the earliest arrival of the human stock and the day when the white man began to bring goods to trade for the Indians' furs there were undoubtedly many shifts in the Cassiar population. Evidence exists today that migration brought people from the Fort Nelson River valley into Kaska territory. Once the trader arrived, more extensive shifts of people took place, the movement now being inspired by the desire for favorable fur prices and the trader's goods. Between 1890 and 1900 the peak of such mobility appears to have been reached and it thoroughly scrambled the Cassiar population.

101 At the time when the more easterly Cassiar people first contacted the white man in the Mackenzie basin the group collectively and gratuitously referred to as Kaska (synonymy: Casca) was divided into a number of macrocosmic groups or tribes. These units have been variously named, the confusion being due to the fact that the groups were loosely organized and failed to adopt fixed tribal designations of their own. The nomenclature to be given here reflects ideas in the minds of Indian informants concerning more or less delimited human aggregates. It is not likely that if different informants had been consulted the same designations would have been obtained. As a matter of fact the same informants might have altered their classifications from time to time. Before presenting this scheme, it is proposed to examine earlier writers' subdivisions of the Cassiar people.

114 According to Dawson the Kaska, bounded on the west by the Tahltan, hunted in the country drained by the Dease River "but north of the sources of streams reaching the Dease, they wander seldom" except as far "as Frances Lake."[19] East of the Dease they occupied the drainage of the Turnagain (Black) River "but not to the headwater of that stream, as the country there is claimed by the Al-ta'-tin ('Sicconie') of Bear Lake region. . . ." They also exploited the country northeast as far as Fort Halkett, where

[17] Leechman, *Prehistoric Migration Routes through the Yukon* (1946), 387–388.

[18] Johnson, *Archaeological Survey along the Alaska Highway* (1946). He discovered no sites between Teslin village and Muncho Lake. The latter place is already outside of the Cassiar proper.

[19] Dawson, *Report of an Exploration in the Yukon District, N. W. T., and Adjacent Northern Portion of British Columbia, 1887* (1887–88), 200.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

114 between the Liard and Mackenzie, dwelt the Espätoten or histoten. Finally, the Tsetsexotena exploited the region north of the Espätoten.

By way of comment, it is obvious that Teit means to group the Bear Lake Sekani with the Kaska or Nahani. He maintains that the former speak a dialect "exactly the same as the Upper Liard and Hyland Indians," a dubious assertion judging from contemporary evidence. Working with the word Nahani Teit got exactly the results that one could now predict would be secured by presenting this term to a number of informants from different parts of the country. The term denotes little known and potentially hostile strangers. It is certainly a cognate of Na'ani, a group which is included in the larger class.

Allard gives the Kaska a territory which in about 1925 extended from Dease Lake "down the Dease to about twenty miles west of the Upper Liard Rivers."[23] Southeast of Dease Lake and Dease River he would extend the Kaska to longitude 126°, or just west of Muncho Lake and considerably east of the Kechika River. South he continues them to the fifty-eighth parallel, that is almost to the headwaters of the Stikine and to Sifton Pass. Northwest they are said to range along the Liard to the height of land but not beyond the Yukon border. The divide, however, which is where the Liard River rises, is clearly north of the British Columbia-Yukon border.

On the basis of available evidence Jenness in 1932 divided the Kaska (whom he extends from McDame Creek eastward to the Beaver River, a little west of Fort Liard) into two groups, the Tsezotena or "Mountain People on the east" and the Titshotina, "Big Water People on the west."[24] The boundary between the Mountain and Big Water peoples is put at the junction of the Kechika and "Dease rivers." This latter statement certainly reflects an oversight since the Kechika flows northwest from Sifton Pass to join the Liard and not the Dease. The confluence of the Kechika and Liard occurs about 70 miles below Lower Post. Jenness probably meant the Liard River. East and northeast of the Mountain people, on the Beaver and South Nahanni rivers, Jenness places the Esbaottine. We would argue that a distinction of the groups on either side of the Kechika River appears valid, regardless of how those groups may be designated. Jenness did not know that the westerly Indians by no means regard themselves as a single, homogeneous unit, the Upper Liard people, for example, distinguishing themselves from the Dease River dwellers. Still further north lie the also distinct Frances Lake Indians.

Osgood extends the classification by Jenness to include as Kaska the Tsezotena Titshotina, and Esbaottine, as well as "the little known people of the Upper Liard River drainage who have frequently been called Nahani."[25] We would add the Frances Lake people, especially if similarity of dialect be regarded as an important criterion of classification.

101 On the basis of long-standing relations, intermarriage, mutual intelligibility, and absence of serious geographical barriers it appears reasonable to group the people living around Frances Lake, the Upper Liard, Dease, and Middle Liard rivers in a single

[23] Allard, *Notes on the Kaska and Upper Liard Indians* (1928), 24.
[24] Jenness, *Indians of Canada* (1932), 396.
[25] Osgood, *Distribution of the Northern Athapaskan Indians* (1936), 13.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

category. Since the name "Kaska" has already been applied to the Indians of this area we will continue to follow this nomenclature for the several tribes who aboriginally inhabited the region delimited above. Constituting the Kaska community or nation were five macrocosmic bands or tribes here designated Natitu'agotena, Kistagotena, Tselona, (E)spatotena, and Tutcogotena. Each of these will now be identified more closely. 106

1. The Natitu'a'gotena, "Dwellers at a High Sharp Mountain Where a Little River Starts" (synonymy: Upper Liard Kaska) are the Indians who occupied the area close to the source of the Liard River as well as the banks of that stream extending southeast to the canyon located where today the border of Yukon Territory crosses the Liard. This canyon is about eight miles above Lower Post. Some of the Upper Liard people spent every winter at Watson Lake and in season others visited the Pelly River to fish for salmon.

2. South and southeast of the Natitu'agotena were the Ki'stagotena, "Mountain Dwellers" (synonymy: Dease River Kaska), who might also be referred to as the Kaska proper because it is this group to whom the name originally applied. The designation Mountain Dwellers becomes somewhat gratuitous when applied to a single group, since in the fall most of the Cassiar Indians hunted on the mountain slopes. The people living along McDame Creek above its junction with Dease River were also known as Onzana. The total range of the Kistagotena included the valleys of the Dease south from the Liard to the head of Dease Lake, where a divide separated them from the Tahltan. Eastward they extended about halfway to Sifton Pass, where the Kechika River is formed. West the Dease River Kaska ranged as far as the Cordillera.

3. The Tse'lona (synonymy: Nelson Indians), a word variously translated as "Mountain Top," "End Point," or "Point at Which is Located the End of the World," are apparently Jenness' and Osgood's Tsezotena. They occupied the area east of the Kistagotena and along the Kechika River. The establishment of Fort Nelson after 1800 attracted these people beyond the borders of the Cassiar to trade at that post on the other side of the Rocky Mountains. Among the Sekani and Slave Indians who frequented the Nelson River Valley the Tselona became known as Grand Lakers and came much to be feared for sorcery.[26] Today in Lower Post at least some Indians from the middle Liard are called Nelson Indians. Morice identified the "Tse-loh-ne" with the Etchere-ottine or Brushwood People and estimated their population at 350. He located them on the Liard, immediately east of the Rocky Mountains.[27] We would be less inclined to overlook distinctions between the people of the middle Liard (Tselona) and the Etca'otena of Fort Nelson. Contemporary members of the former group complained of being unable to understand the speech of the Fort Nelson Slave. Historically, after the European traders crossed the Rocky Mountains, the Tselona traded at Chee House, which was built about 1880 at the mouth of the Kechika. This post was later shifted inland. Today [197]

[26] Honigmann, *Witch-Fear in Post-Contact Kaska Society* (1947), 223.

[27] Morice, *Great Dene Race* (1906-10), 270-271, 307. The dictionaries of the Oblate Fathers, which the author consulted at Fort Nelson, define the Slave word sayune as "male mountain sheep." If sayune and tselona are cognates we conclude that there could have been both Sheep People and Goat People in the eastern Kaska area or that the same group was designated in two ways.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

101 the people visit Forts Ware and Grahame as well as Lower Post. In some census reports the Tselona are listed as "Fort Grahame Nomads."

4. North and northeast of the Tselona were the (E)spa'totena, "Dwellers among the Wild Goats," or "Goat Indians," also referred to as Gata'otena, "People who Hunt Rabbits" (synonymy: Abbatotine, Esbataottine, Ambawlawhoot dennèh, Espätoten, Histotina). These people inhabited the area north of the Liard, including the drainages of the Beaver, South Nahanni, and perhaps Upper Nahanni rivers. With contact some came to trade at Fort Halkett and Lower Post while others congregated at Fort Liard. At the latter place Bishop Grouard designated them People of the Mountains and Bad People. Future research may indicate more clearly where the eastern boundary of the Espatotena is to be drawn in order to separate them from the Mountain Indians. [197] One informant (O) denied that, on the basis of dialect similarity, the Espatotena could be related to their western neighbors. Claiming to have spent a year with this group, he illustrated some differences between the Natitu'agotena and Espatotena dialects. Thus his word for meat, etsun, was said to be rendered a'apa by the latter, a reference probably to goat; moose, gatɔ, becomes gulon (as in Fort Nelson); caribou, gutzi, becomes matsi, and sheep, depe, becomes duza.

5. By Tu'tcogotena, "Big Water Dwellers" (synonymy: Frances Lake Kaska; Titshotina; Titcotena; Tzazi'a'otena, "Flint Mountain Dwellers," and Tutcomenagotena, "Big Water Lake Dwellers") is indicated the Indians who formerly and at the present time occupy the area around Frances Lake and upper Frances River. Sometimes these people ranged east and south to the headwaters of the Hyland and Smith rivers. Like the word Kistagotena the designation Big Water People is not descriptively exclusive since the Finlay, Liard, and Dease rivers have all at various times been called "Big Water" by Indians.[28] Hence the people inhabiting the shores of these streams may logically be referred to as Big Water Dwellers. In 1926 a police patrol to Frances Lake reported that "the country between the canyons on the Frances River is a natural game preserve. The Frances Lake Indians do not hunt south and the Liard Indians do not go further north than the first canyon. The country between is therefore untouched."[29] This statement may be taken as evidence of a distinction between the Upper Liard and Frances Lake Indians. The designation for the people, Flint Mountain Dwellers, was suggested by an informant familiar with the habit of the Indians to hunt in the vicinity of a certain source of flint. Two informants said that the Frances Lake people could also be called Terahan, a term otherwise used for the Pelly River people.

These then constitute the groups whom it is proposed to include in the Kaska nation. The meaning of the term Kaska is itself difficult to elucidate. According to George Adsit, a white man with a fair knowledge of the Athapaskan language, the word means "old moccasins" and was originally bestowed on the Dease River Indians as a term of opprobrium by their Tahltan neighbors. According to a Tahltan informant from Telegraph Creek, the Tahltan refer to the Kaska as Kɔswa, a word whose meaning was inexplicable to him. A Kaska Indian (WT) said that the people referred to themselves as

[28] Morice, *Fur Trade in Anthropology* (1928), 63.
[29] Canada, *Report of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police* (1926), 83.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

kaca, a word that he could not define. No informant pointed out that the term could be related to the local word for boot, keske. Morice opines that "Kaska is the name of no tribe or sub-tribe, but McDane [sic!] Creek is called by the name Na·ane KasHa—the H representing a peculiar gutteral-sibilant aspiration—and this is the real word which corrupted into Cassiar by the whites, has, since a score of years or more, served to designate the whole mining region."[30] Although it is difficult to be definite concerning the associations of the term Kaska, enough data are at hand to criticize with some finality the use of the term Nahani for any group of Indians. Various widely scattered people have at various times been called by this appellation. Thus the present writer heard in the field that long ago the Nahani Indians hunted in the area between McDame Creek Post and Kechika River. These people were said to have been giants who died out because of incestuous practices, sons even copulating with mothers and fathers with daughters (WT).[31] Another informant identified the Nahani with the Pelly River people, while another man applied the word to the Tahltan. Writing early in the nineteenth century Keith describes the country around Fort Liard as having been abandoned by the "Na ha né tribe" under pressure from a new population.[32] The reports of the Department of Indian Affairs frequently contain references to "nomadic" Nahani Indians said to reside in the corner made by the Fort Nelson and Liard rivers. In 1915 a report stated that these people "are gradually merging into surrounding bands in the north and that in a few years they will have entirely lost their identity and standing as a band."[33] In 1943, in Fort Nelson, the writer was assured by the game warden of northern British Columbia that Nahani was another name for certain Kaska Indians inhabiting the area around Nelson Forks and west of Fort Nelson. From all this the conclusion follows that numerous Athapaskan groups themselves designated as Nahani (na- indicates "enemy" or "hostile"[34]) other remote and distrusted Indian bands with whom they lacked frequent relations. European and Canadian writers have tried to apply the term to specific population units.

101 ●

[773]

Surrounding the Kaska Indians were a number of other Athapaskan speaking groups. In clockwise order, immediately to the southwest and west were the Tahltan Indians (synonymy: Tatcotena, Tutcotena). Various equivalents were received for this group, including People who Fish Salmon in the River and People who Stay in a Low Place. Beal Carlick, a Tahltan informant, derived the name from the village of Tahltan, located at the juncture of the Tahltan and Stikine rivers. The village itself received its appellation from a woman who descended the Tahltan River and at its mouth met a man who had originally come from the south. This man heard a voice calling from the opposite bank of the Stikine and so discovered the woman. They exchanged names. He asked her if she belonged to the Crow or Wolf moiety and she replied that she was Crow. The man

[30] Morice, *Nah-ane and their Language* (1900-03), 519.

[31] The Dease River was once called the "Nahany." See Parnell, *Campbell of the Yukon* (1942), 5.

[32] Keith, *Letters to Mr. Roderic McKenzie* (1890), 66-68. See also Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians* (1912), II, 11.

[33] Canada, *Annual Reports of the Department of Indian Affairs* (1915), 103.

[34] Heijer, *Linguistic History* (1946), 225. See below, p. 92, 97.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

● 101 was Wolf. Her name was Tahltanma, a word whose meaning the informant did not know. The Tahltan tribe (or macrocosmic group) in closest proximity to the Kaska was the Nalotena, "People who Live in a Country Where There is Not Much Snow" or North People. These people ranged from about 40 miles north of the present site of Telegraph Creek on the Cheseli River to as far as Teslin Lake.[33] To the west the Nalotena met the Tlingit. The latter Indians sometimes brought trade goods up the Cheseli River to the Tahltan fishing village of Naliin, at the confluence of the Naliin ("Waterfall") and Cheseli rivers. Near Naliin was the Tahltan village of Tselɔ in a canyon that the Indians bridged. Other villages were located at hunting and fishing sites on salmon streams and fish lakes like Tstałue, "Flat Rock Fish Lake." In the spring the people fished for rainbow trout in that lake. Another village, Tediititc, "Hand in the Water All the Time for Fish," lay inland from Naliin and was frequented by Indians fishing for grayling with a hand net.

North of the Tahltan and northwest of the Upper Liard Indians dwelt the Taku people, grouped around Teslin Lake and River and occupying the drainage of Nisutlin River. Kaska informants identified the Taku as Tlingit (a feature also noted by Teit[34]), indicating perhaps a displacement of the original Taku population by Tlingit immigrants. The people of the Teslin area were also known as Totena. Taku people used to meet the Kaska at a Groundhog Lake near the headwaters of the Rancheria River. Here the Kaska went in autumn to hunt groundhog. Most of the Kaska also knew of the existence of "Salt Water Indians" situated west of the Taku. In recent years visitors from the Cassiar have met Tlingit Indians at Wrangell in Alaska. According to Parnell, a party of Tlingit under a female chieftainess visited Dease Lake Hudson's Bay Post in the winter of 1938-39.[35]

North of the Kaska were the inhabitants of the Ross and Pelly River basins, the Akidirtinitu?agotena, "Dwellers Where Two Rivers Join at Right Angles," also called Terahan(i), "Over the Ridge People." The Upper Liard and Frances Lake people occasionally sought salmon at Pelly Banks and there encountered Pelly Indians. The latter also traveled south to what is now called Albert or Cormier Creek, near Watson Lake. They made this journey in order to contact the Tahltan traders who after 1700 became middlemen carrying European trade goods inland from the Tlingit. The Frances Lake Kaska easily understand the dialect of the Pelly River Indians. According to an Upper Liard informant (O) the dialect of the Frances Lake people is closer to that of the Pelly people than it is to the Liard River dwellers.[36] According to Jenness, citing a

[114] [33] Barbeau has the Tahltan coming to trade at Frances Lake about 1840. This was possible, but his work is completely fictional, and better source material is needed before such a range for the Tahltan becomes accepted even for post-contact times. (Barbeau, *Mountain Cloud* [1944].) One informant (RJ) claimed the Tahltan went to within 20 miles of the confluence of the Frances and Liard rivers.

[34] Teit, *Unpublished manuscript* (1915?).

[35] Parnell, *Campbell of the Yukon* (1942), 6.

[36] Sheldon saw the Pelly people "closely allied to that branch of the Nahanni group designated as Kaska." Perhaps such similarity is late and related to Kaska emigrants in the Pelly basin. Sheldon, *Wilderness of the Upper Yukon* (1919), 190.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

manuscript of Poole Field, a band of Mackenzie Indians wiped out the original Pelly and Ross River populations about 1886. One or two survivors found refuge with the Frances Lake people, some of whom extended themselves northward. Their descendants are today in possession of the Pelly drainage basin. Teslin Lake Indians (Taku?) also moved in to the country vacated by the autochthonous Pelly population.[39] In the field the present writer heard that the establishment of a trading post at Ross River in about 1898 caused some Indians to leave off trading at Lower Post and to take up trapping around Frances Lake. They went to trade at Ross River post where prices were lower. The movement north included Indians like Old Ceasar and coincided with the Yukon gold rush, when a horse trail was cut from Lower Post across the divide separating Frances Lake from Pelly River.

To the northeast the Frances Lake Kaska bordered on the territory of the Mackenzie River People, the Klukotena. To the east and southeast the Espatotena adjoined the Beaver Indians, Tsapagotena, of the lower Liard, and the Fort Nelson Slave, Etcaʔotena (synonymy: Atcotena "People Who Hunt in a Brushy Place," and Gutzitotena, "People Who Work all the Time.") The Atcotena obviously correspond to Petitot's Étca-cttinè, "gens a l'abri."[40] On the south the Kaska contacted that branch of the Sekani known as the Bear Lake Indians. In recent years this tribe has penetrated far down the Kechika River, almost to the Liard, and came to trade at McDame Creek as well as at Fort Ware.[41] Considerable intermarriage has occurred between the Kaska and Bear Lake people. In Kaska their name is rendered Sastotena (synonymy: Sateune; Tsekona, "Mountain People"; Satelune; Sazeootina; Sazentina; and Sezotena). The frequency of intermarriage and the penetration of the Liard country by the Bear Lake are probably jointly responsible for the frequency with which these people have been included in the Kaska nation. Moderately strong differences in dialect[42] plus the fact that Jenness has already grouped them with the Sekani[43] recommend their exclusion from the Kaska category. The Bear Lakers' movement down the Kechika probably followed the closing of their trading post, Fort Connell, on Bear Lake at the head of the Skeena River, in 1890.

Apart from these Athapaskan speaking neighbors the Kaska aboriginally also knew the troublesome Cree Indians, teciina, "They Hide Themselves."

POPULATION

Few helpful data are available with which to estimate the aboriginal population of the Kaska tribes. Kroeber, following Mooney, gives a population of 500. Since he allots a somewhat smaller area to the nation than we do his density figure of 1.00 per hundred

[39] Jenness, *Indians of Canada* (1932), 396.

[40] Honigmann, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave* (1946), 24-25; cf. Petitot, *Autour du grand lac des Esclaves* (1891), 363; also pp. 344-358.

[41] See Hunter, *Frances Lake, Yukon* (1924), 98; Stanwell-Fletcher, *Naturalists in the Wilds of British Columbia* (1940).

[42] See below p. 80. A Frances Lake youth said he could understand hardly a word of Bear Lake.

[43] Jenness, *Sekani Indians of British Columbia* (1937), 9-10.

7: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1947
ND12 Nahane ND12

WITCH-FEAR IN POST-CONTACT KASKA SOCIETY

By JOHN J. HONIGMANN

ABORIGINALLY the Kaska, like their Northern Athapaskan neighbors, were familiar with sorcery—behavior in which a person with sufficiently strong shamanistic power would steal, or was believed to steal, the wind or soul of a personal enemy and thereby induce illness. Although people who practiced such behavior were feared by the rest of the society's members, they were not usually put to death or otherwise punished. Sorcery, however, was regarded as evil and might therefore automatically lead to punishment in the form of insanity. There is no evidence that sorcery in aboriginal times ever was as prevalent as similar behavior in certain African and Melanesian groups. Following white contact, however, a socially dyscrasic form of behavior appeared among the Kaska which, to distinguish it from the sorcery complex associated with the aboriginal society, may be designated as witch-hunting or witch-fear. The present paper will first present the available evidence from historical sources and informants regarding this form of behavior. Following this an attempt will be made to analyze that material from an historical, psychological, and structural point of view and apply the findings in a universal frame of reference.[1]

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The Kaska still occupy the territory which they have always inhabited in the memory of the oldest informants. This is the area extending northwest of the Stikine River, British Columbia, Canada, to the divide north of Frances Lake, Yukon Territory, and from the western Cordillera east across the Rocky Mountains (Fig. 1). The main rivers traversing this region are the Liard, Frances, and Dease. The name Kaska is a conventional term adopted from one group of people to classify a number of contiguous tribes speaking closely related dialects. Within the area designated as Kaska several such tribes have been variously distinguished in the literature, but for present purposes the names by which they are locally known today will suffice. In the extreme north are the Frances Lake Indians. Occupying the basin of the Liard, from about the present Highway crossing twenty-three miles above Lower Post to within a hundred miles of that river's source, are the Upper Liard Indians. The

[1] Field work with the Kaska Indians took place from June to September 1944 and from June to December 1945. The work was sponsored by the Department of Anthropology and the Peabody Museum of Natural History of Yale University. To Professors Cornelius Osgood and Irving Rouse are due thanks for critically reading this manuscript. The present account will offer a minimum of general ethnographic detail. A description of the aboriginal culture based on reconstruction is planned for future publication and a psychologically oriented study of the contemporary culture is already partially in manuscript.

7: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1947
ND12 Nahane ND12

Cordillera live the Taku Indians. Beyond these, bordering the Pacific, are the Tlingit.

The total population of the Kaska probably never numbered more than about three or four hundred persons. Today about two hundred people constitute the tribes lying between the two mountain ranges.[3]

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Fur traders established their first contacts with the Kaska east of the Rocky Mountains shortly after 1800. In 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company built a post west of the mountains (Fort Halkett) and in 1838 another at Dease Lake. Frances Lake post was founded in 1840. It must be pointed out that these meetings with traders were not soon followed by missionary contact as was the rule in many other parts of the Northern Athapaskan area. In 1872 the discovery of gold along Dease River brought a great influx of miners into the country, most of whom traveled up the Stikine waterway, crossed the portage from Telegraph Creek in Tahltan Indian country, and then went down Dease Lake and River. By 1876 the white population in the latter drainage basin is estimated to have reached about 2,000 people, including a large number of Chinese laborers. By 1887, however, the strangers had nearly all disappeared although a number of Chinese remained to work abandoned bearings. In 1897 and 1898 a second wave of miners entered the area, this time en route to the Klondike gold fields which, because of the exigencies of the climate, many were never to reach. As a result of the large population in these periods trading posts came to be established at the confluence of McDame Creek and Dease River and, shortly before 1890, another where the Dease meets the Liard, the so-called Lower Post.

Certain concomitants of these early contacts have a bearing on the present problem. From the traders and other white men the Kaska were introduced to new varieties of food, tools, and shelter as well as to attitudes that undermined many aboriginal beliefs and behaviors. New semi-permanently occupied shelters, like log cabins, were introduced but do not appear to have taken serious hold until about twenty years ago. Previous to that time, life history data reveal, mobility was still largely maintained with a consequent dependence on temporary camps and game and fish rather than on stores of white food accumulated for winter consumption. Even today the Frances Lake Indians retain considerable dependence on environmental resources, food being highly expensive in a remote outpost like Frances Lake which receives most of its supplies by air. The principal beliefs disappearing before the ridicule of the whites pertained to religion, shamanism, and sorcery. War, of course, was abandoned early in the contact period. Something of the character of the people's reaction to the growing domination of the white society may be

[3] Canada, 1944. Only one or two Frances Lake Indians are included in this census.

7: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1947
ND12 Nahane ND12

basin of Dease Lake and Dease River is the home of the Kaska proper who may also be distinguished as the Dease River Indians. Extending to the eastern mountains are the Nelson people; until perhaps twenty years ago this tribe occasionally crossed the mountains to trade at Fort Nelson from whence they derive their name. Another branch of the Kaska, the Goat Indians (Espatotena), occupied the area north of the Liard but east of the Rocky Mountains above the mouths of the Beaver and South Nahanni Rivers. They are appar-

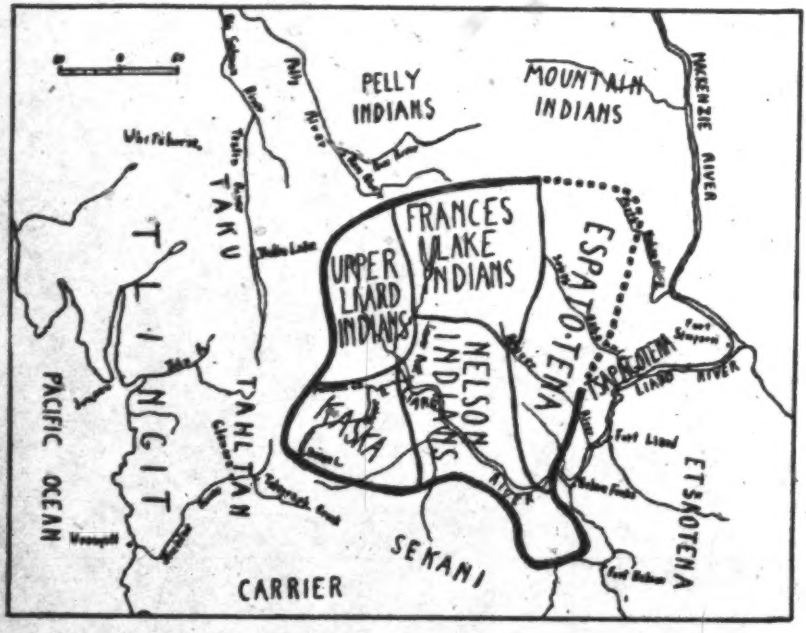

FIG. 1. Map of the Kaska Area Showing Kaska and Adjoining Tribes.

ently Grouard's People of the Mountains or Bad People who consistently traded at Fort Liard after the abandonment of Fort Halkett in 1865 and today do not visit Lower Post.[3]

Surrounding the Kaska are other Athapaskan-speaking groups. Immediately to the south and southwest are the Tahltan and beyond them the Carrier. North of the Frances Lake Indians is the country of the Pelly River people. To the east the Kaska are adjoined by the related Fort Nelson Slave (Etäaotena) and Beaver Indians (Tsapagotena), while across the western

[3] Grouard, n.d., p. 102; Osgood, 1936, p. 13.